

VZCZCXRO7528  
PP RUEHMA RUEHPA RUEHTRO  
DE RUEHNK #0710 3381443  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 031443Z DEC 08  
FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7894  
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUCNMGH/MAGHREB COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHDO/AMEMBASSY DOHA PRIORITY 0290  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 0344  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 0672  
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY 1887  
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY 0368  
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY  
RUEHDS/USMISSION USAU ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 0410  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0785

UNCLAS NOUAKCHOTT 000710

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [KDEM](#) [MR](#)  
SUBJECT: NATIONAL DAY MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT BUSH GARNERS  
LOCAL PRESS ATTENTION

REF: STATE 125129

11. (U) Charge hand-delivered message from President Bush to President Abdallahi (Reftel) on November 30 to FNDD co-leader in charge of Foreign Affairs Mohamed Ould Maouloud. Local media picked up the story December 1, resulting in several calls to the PAO section asking for confirmation that the message was genuine. Press coverage of the message was limited to short articles that only presented the facts, with no additional commentary. However, a broad cross-section of the media covered the message: both pro-coup and anti-coup, and French-language and Arabic-language newspapers and websites devoted space to it.

12. (SBU) Comment: Anti-coup groups undoubtedly welcomed the letter as a continuing sign of strong USG commitment to the Mauritanian constitution. Press interest in the message indicates that any kind of official high-level communication from the USG to GIRM has the power to create a stir in the local media. The FNDD did not release the actual text of the short letter from the President. End comment.

HANKINS